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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER

and I am ready to be advised in any direction in which good results are to be attained at a small expenditure of money. We are not rich but we are possessed of exacting tastes—my husband and myself. But to come to the question of importance: With other belongings I have inherited several pieces of handsome old mahogany furniture—among them a clothes-press or wardrobe that is my special treasure. These pieces of furniture, with the wear and tear of several generations, are in bad condition, showing scratches and other unsightly defacement; but if committed for restoration and repair to a cabinet workman, the expense would be much greater than my husband could afford. I have been told that we could safely undertake the work of restoration at home—that many housekeepers are now doing work of this kind. Will you tell me something about it? and how to proceed in the work? A suggestion may prove of much value to me, and at any rate I shall be grateful for attention."

It is true that many housewives are now restoring their defaced furniture, and thus economizing; and some of the furniture seen by the writer has been as beautifully restored as if work had been done by the workman—the most experienced in his business. Mahogany lends itself with special kindness to the restoring process. The oldest and the most defaced piece of mahogany furniture can be made to look not only as well but even better than the new furniture of the present, in as much as the wood is improved by age. For the purpose powdered pumice stone is employed to take off all the old polish and leave the wood in the natural state. Have at hand a vessel of cold water with the powdered pumice in a convenient wide, shallow vessel. Use an old towel or other stout cloth, which dip in the water, wring out thoroughly, and then in the pumice dust; that must be rubbed forcibly upon the furniture, and into all beadings, bevelings and carvings, until every touch of the old polish is removed, and the wood presents an unsightly appearance. If this result be not effected with one rubbing with the pumice, repeat it until it is effected. Then wash off the piece of furniture through several waters, or until every grain of the pumice dust is removed, and when thoroughly dry apply one or two coats of fine coach varnish. The varnishing must be done carefully and judiciously, with neither too light nor too heavy a brush; or neither with too great nor too chary in expenditure of the varnish. The result of this restoring process for defaced furniture is a source of delight to all prudent and economical housewives.

FERN DESIGNS, AND WHAT USE TO PUT THEM TO.

BY DORA HARVEY VROOMAN.

BEAUTIFUL soft curtains for a bed-room or lady's boudoir may be made from fine Swiss muslin decorated with a border of feathery ferns. All that is required to make them is muslin, enough for the curtains, a tooth brush, a fine-tooth comb, some jet black ink, and a quantity of pressed ferns. In gathering ferns for pressing select as perfect ones as can be found. Lay them smoothly between the leaves of some large book to press, or place them between two flat boards and place heavy weights on the top one—some bricks or a couple of heavy flat-irons will answer this purpose. When thoroughly pressed they will be ready for use.

To make the curtains first measure off the required lengths of Swiss muslin for each window, allowing enough to fall gracefully to the floor. A border of ferns is then made in "spatter work" down each curtain.

Spread an old sheet smoothly on the floor and tack it tightly and firmly. Then lay a length of the curtain material down upon it and pin it securely to the sheet at each end, stretching it enough to prevent wrinkling or creasing. Next take your pressed ferns and arrange them gracefully down the edge of the curtain to form a border. They may be fastened in place by pins or fine gimp tacks. Cover all the curtain, except the border where the ferns are fastened, with an old sheet, an old table cover, or anything that will protect it. But let it be something old as it will be likely to be spoiled with ink spots. Dip a tooth brush or fine nail brush into some deep black ink, then comb the ink out over the fern border with a fine tooth comb. This will make tiny black spots, or "spatters," of ink all over the ferns and border. Do it as evenly as possibly. When you have finished leave till thoroughly dry. Then carefully lift the pins from the ferns, remove them, and take the curtain from the floor.

You will then have a dark border band with pure white ferns out upon it. You must do each curtain separately. The ferns, if you have handled them carefully, may be used several times. These curtains will look lovely when finished. They will also be found very serviceable as they can be washed and ironed without fading. (You must not, of course, use any kind of soda or bleaching compound in the washing.) They may be hung

up with white oak poles only, or you may, if you choose, use a lambrequin.

Tidies, pillow-shams, bureau covers, and bed-spreads may be made to correspond. While "spatter work" is not new the making of these curtains is; it is my own idea and has never been published before. The set I made lasted for years, the border wearing as long as the remainder of the curtains.

A dainty summer bed-room, a room which will seem to have stolen the soft, cooling zephyrs from the woods and imprisoned them within its four walls, one which will suggest life

"Under the greenwood trees,"

may be furnished as follows: Cover the floor with white matting, or if the boards are smooth and even, color it with white oak stain, and when dry give it a coat of varnish. Lay a few bright rugs here and there. The walls should be painted or papered some soft neutral tint. Select white oak or ash furniture, the bed dressed with white spread and pillow-shams of fern designs in "spatter work." Bamboo chairs and couch. The windows hung with curtains as just described. Some dainty bits of water-colors or sketches framed in flat oak frames, a light ash book rack with some books or magazines upon it may dress the walls. A dainty, pretty little reminder of some pleasant jaunt, made as follows, may also be added to this summer room:

While in the fields or woods gather some grasses, a few daisies and buttercups, a sprig or two of clover, or any other pretty wild flower, and press them on your return home. When dry arrange them artistically, using a little mucilage, on a rough square of Whatman's drawing paper. Mark where and when gathered in one corner. Frame in a flat oak frame, and you will have a very effective memento of some pleasant trip.

A cushion or two made of some pretty cretonne or chintz and filled with pine needles, for couch or rocking chair, will also bring a breath of the woods into this dainty nook.

SUMMER NOTES.

BY MARY FRANCES HARMAN.

IHAVE in my desk a printed rule for hanging a hammock, which is yellow with age, and which is yet all untried, simply because just the right place and sufficient space have never been available. Perhaps those of my readers who live in the country and have all outdoors at their disposal, may be glad to try the experiment.

The head end, so says the rule, should be 6½ feet from the ground, and the foot end 3½ feet. This secures the most desirable curve for the ease of the occupant. The head end should be fastened to the hook by a rope less than a foot long, just long enough to attach it properly, while that at the foot should be 4½ feet long. This gives freedom for swinging the lower part of the body while the head is nearly stationary. I gave these directions to a carpenter the other day, but he was not able to follow any except that relating to the head end, as the only available places for the hooks covered such a space that the foot end had to be raised considerably. But the hammock is very comfortable as he has hung it, and is much enjoyed by the whole family, as it is indoors, and takes the place of a sofa in the family sitting room. Hammocks are coming to be used this way, especially by invalids, and they may easily be hooked back against the wall when not needed. They are more suitable if made of cord in the natural color, or else of that which is bleached quite white. To be effective they must contain two or three gay pillows, the coverings of which harmonize in colorings, and these coverings may be either of turkey red bandanna handkerchiefs, or of plain, dark gingham.

Down pillows are, of course, most luxurious, but they are not by any means indispensable, as dried clovers, dried rose leaves, and even paper torn into small bits are used for the purpose.

I knew a young boy once who made several beautiful hammocks during a summer vacation and much enjoyed the work. When the little trick of the knot is once learned netting is easy to do, and if a fine strong cord is used it will well repay the labor.

THE tea-table is an established feature on the tennis ground, and many clubs have a small house where they serve refreshments after the game. One such club-house in a suburban town near New York is a single-storied structure with a dark red sloping roof, and on this roof are several wooden boxes in which bright flowers and trailing vines are growing. The reception room is in white and gold with wicker furniture and light colored hangings, and on the pretty piazza are placed several tables daintily set out for tea, with a bowl of flowers for decoration in the center of each one.